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May 28, 2003

JUN 11 2003

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary
9300 East Hampton Drive
Capitol Heights, MD 20743

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

Re: Informal Comments, MB Dkt. No. 02 277; MM Dkt. No. 01 235; MM Dkt. No. 01 317; MM Dkt. No. 00 244

Dear Secretary Dortch:

This letter is being sent in opposition to the above referenced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, released September 23, 2002, regarding changes in the current FCC rules governing media ownership.

The public presence of diverse and minority perspectives, including religious, is a cornerstone of our democracy. However, the proposed media ownership changes would further homogenize mass communications to an alarming level, at the clear expense of cultural diversity and public access.

Increasingly narrow media formats already beleaguer religious programming, in particular. With disturbing regularity, media outlets now preclude programming of religious services or religiously-based advertisements. Acceptance of the proposed media ownership changes could essentially mark the end of religious programming in the United States altogether.

Together with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, we urge the FCC to refrain from making changes in the current reasonable rules which: (a) prohibit cross ownership of broadcast stations and newspapers in the same community, (b) limit the number of television and radio stations a single entity may own in a single community, and, (c) prohibit common ownership of major television networks.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

Guy Ciarrocchi
Director

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c: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops